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The RMB Project - development status and lessons learned.

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Brazilian research reactors and related facilities have a limited capacity for radioisotope production, leading to a high dependence on external supply for radioisotopes used in nuclear medicine. In order to overcome this condition and due to the very old age of the main research reactors in the country, the Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission (CNEN) decided to start a new research reactor project, named RMB (Brazilian Multipurpose Reactor). This reactor will be part of a new nuclear research center, to be built on a site about 100 kilometers from São Paulo city, in the southeast part of Brazil. The new nuclear research center will have a 30 MW open pool type research reactor using low enriched uranium fuel, and several associated facilities and laboratories in order to produce radioisotopes for medical and industrial use; to use thermal and cold neutron beams in scientific and technological research; to perform neutron activation analysis; and to perform materials and fuel irradiation tests. This article presents updated information on technical issues as well as on the overall development status of the RMB project. It also discusses some technical matters and lessons learned related to the complexity of the project management.

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